DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 234 313 CG 016 907

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TITLE Moral Development: Its Relation to Ego Development and Intraception.
PUB DATE Aug 82
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (90th, Washington, DC, August 23-27, 1982).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; Developmental Stages; Higher Education; Individual Development; *Interpersonal Competence; Interpersonal Relationship; *Moral Development; *Personality Development; *Personality Traits
IDENTIFIERS *Ego Development Theory; *Intraception

ABSTRACT

Factors which aid an individual's progression from one stage of moral reasoning to another remain a mystery. Theorists suggest that intraception, defined as a predominance of feeling, fantasy, and aspirations (connoting a humanistic outlook and an ability to develop role-taking skills) as opposed to a down-to-earth, skeptical attitude, may be an important factor in the quality of moral decision making. Ego development has also been hypothesized to be related to moral development. To examine intraception and ego development as they relate to the progression of moral reasoning abilities, college students (N=40) completed the Defining Issues Test (DIT) measuring moral reasoning; the Sentence Completion Test (SCT) to assess ego development; and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) to evaluate strength of intraception. Analyses of results showed support for the hypothesis that moral development is part of the broader concept of ego development, and that the need for intraception is related to both moral and ego development. The data suggest that an affective trait or personality variable (intraception) affects the development of moral reasoning level, possibly by influencing the quality of interpersonal relations. (Author/WAS)

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ED234313

Moral Development:

Its Relation to Ego Development and Intraception

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A paper presented at the Ninetieth Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. D., August, 1982.

CG 016907

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Abstract

This study is a preliminary effort to analyze factors related to the progression of moral reasoning abilities. The two factors examined are ego development and the need for intraception, a personality variable. Participants included 37 students between the ages of 17 and 41. The Defining Issues Test (DIT) was used to measure level of moral reasoning, the Sentence Completion Test (SCT) to assess ego progression and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) to evaluate strength of intraception. The results support Loevinger's hypothesis that moral development is part of the broader concept of ego development. In addition, the hypothesis that the need for intraception is related to both moral and ego development is verified. The data suggest that an affective trait or personality variable affects the development of moral reasoning level, possibly by influencing quality of interpersonal relations.

Qualitatively different stages of moral reasoning have been described by Kohlberg (1969). Factors which facilitate an individual's progression from one stage to another, however, have remained somewhat of a mystery. Several theorists (Kohlberg, 1981; Langer, 1969; Piaget, 1932; Turiel, 1969) have focused primarily upon the concept of cognitive disequilibrium as the major factor in advancement. All were influenced by Piaget, who posited that individual self-regulations have an intrinsic tendency toward equilibrium. Piaget suggested that a state of disequilibrium is created when changes in the environment lead to tension and a feeling of imbalance. An individual adapts to these changes by inventing original solutions which bring about a new form of equilibrium (Piaget, 1970). The conflict involved in this process is understood as absolutely necessary for intellectual growth.

Changes in the environment are often produced by peer interaction, which is a second factor hypothesized to play a major role in stimulating moral growth (Damon, 1982; Turiel, 1969; Youniss, 1981). Turiel suggests that social exchange fosters the development of role-taking skills by making one aware of others' perspectives, including needs and feelings which may be different than one's own. Of course this awareness incites conflict and thus cognitive disequilibrium. Other theorists who emphasize the importance of role-taking abilities in moral development include Kohlberg (1971), Haan (1978), Loevinger (1968), Selman (1980) and Hogan (1973, 1978). These two factors hypothesized to stimulate moral growth, cognitive disequilibrium and role-taking skills, however seem to be necessary but not sufficient. An important question appears to be, what factors strengthen an individual's capacity for interpersonal relations? The consideration suggested to be important in the present study is the need for intraception.

The terms intraception and extraception were first used by Henry A. Murray (1938). These terms were created in relation to Murray's motivational concepts which are based on feelings of conflict and needs which are prepotent, or needs which do not operate in complete isolation from each other. The nature of their interaction or mutual influence is important. He posits each individual has a unique hierarchy of needs with certain tendencies taking precedence over others. Intraception signifies the predominance of feeling, fantasy and aspirations over a down-to-earth, skeptical attitude and a disposition to adhere to facts. It connotes a warm humanistic outlook.

One of the personality inventories that attempts to measure intraception is the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS). The test defines intraception as the need to "analyze one's motives and feelings; to observe others; to understand how others feel about problems; to put one's self in another's place; to judge people by why they do things rather than by what they do; to analyze the behavior of others; to analyze the motives of others; and to predict how others will act." These characteristics seem to be personality factors which would predispose one to develop role-taking skills and this variable could, in part, account for interpersonal development and quality of moral decision making. It was predicted in this study that a positive correlation would result between strength of intraception as measured by the EPPS and level of moral reasoning, as measured by the Defining Issues Test (DIT), an objective test of moral thinking developed by James Rest (1979a).

Another factor which has been hypothesized to be related to moral development is ego development. Jane Loevinger (1970) has postulated qualitatively different stages of ego development: Presocial, Symbiotic (I-1); Impulsive (I-2); Self-protective (Δ delta); Conformist (I-3); Conscien-

tious (I-4); Autonomous (I-5); and Integrated (I-6). For each stage there is a characteristic mode of impulse control and character development; of interpersonal relations; of conscious preoccupation, including self-concept; and cognitive style. Loevinger equates that portion of the ego concerned with impulse control and character development with moral development.

The relationship between moral development and ego development was also explored by Jean Block (1973) in her article on conceptions of sex role. She posits that sex role conceptions change in concurrence with ego development. Individuals having the characteristics of persons at the highest ego levels seem to achieve an integration of both masculine and feminine aspects of themselves, a balance which Block and others (cf. Bem, 1968; Baumrind, 1982) characterize as an androgynous sex-role orientation. In her article Block (1973) discusses two studies that pertain to this relationship between moral and ego development. In the first of these studies, Haan, Smith, and Block (1968) found that individuals at Kohlberg's principled level of moral reasoning also described themselves as having androgynous characteristics. A second study (Block, 1973, pp.521-522), additionally found that high school individuals at higher levels of ego functioning as measured by Loevinger's Sentence Completion Test described themselves as having androgynous characteristics. That is, the men and women at higher levels of ego functioning saw themselves as having characteristics that were shared: men - curious, idealistic and sympathetic; women - restless, altruistic, worrying/doubting. The results of these two independent studies suggest a positive relationship between levels of ego functioning and levels of moral reasoning.

If ego development correlates with higher levels of moral reasoning, it is worthwhile to examine factors that may contribute to mature levels of

ego functioning. Loevinger hypothesizes that one of the factors that contributes to ego enhancement is cognitive development. However, she theorizes that while a certain level of intellectual development is necessary for particular stages of ego functioning, other personal and social factors contribute also. Thus level of intelligence alone is hardly ever a limiting factor in ego development. Other components include interpersonal development, moral development, and development of self-concept and inner life. Loevinger (1970) posits that these aspects of ego functioning proceed together as an integrated structure, and she has devised the Sentence Completion Test (SCT) to measure ego development.

As Loevinger equates that portion of the ego concerned with impulse control and character development with moral development, and as moral reasoning and ego functioning are posited to develop simultaneously, it was hypothesized that scores on the DIT would correlate positively with ego level as measured by the SCT. Further, since intraception seems intuitively related to role-taking skills and capacity for interpersonal relations, it was predicted that there would also be a positive correlation be- the need for intraception as measured by the EPPS and level of ego maturity measured by the SCT.

METHOD

Participants

Participants consisted of 40 students (37 females and 3 males) enrolled in an introductory psychology course at a two-year technical college. While participants ranged in age from 17 to 41, half fell between 18 and 20, with a mean age of 22.2.

Instrumentation

The Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS). This instrument is

based on a list of fifteen manifest needs that were first described by H. A. Murray and others. The strength of each need is measured in relation to the other needs. The EPPS consists of 210 pairs of statements in which items from each of the fifteen different measured needs are paired with items from the other fourteen. This is a forced-choice technique wherein the examinee must choose one statement as more characteristic of himself. Two pairs of items are given below:

A I like to analyze the feelings and motives of others

B I feel depressed by my own inability to handle various situations

A I like to observe how another individual feels in a given situation

B I like to say that I have done a difficult job well

In the above items a choice of "A" in either case would indicate a disposition toward intraception. All fifteen of the personality variables are scored on the Edwards. Raw scores are converted to percentile scores by using one of the four appropriate norms; college men, college women, adult men, adult women.

The Defining Issues Test (DIT). This test developed by James Rest attempts to estimate an individual's moral reasoning level. It consists of a series of six moral dilemmas, each accompanied by twelve statements describing factors which are potentially relevant in resolving the dilemmas. The responses are staged according to Kohlberg's description of moral reasoning levels. Participants are asked to rate each statement and to choose which four of the twelve responses or choices are most important. The test is frequently scored for the P-factor (principled reasoning factor). This score is interpreted as "the relative importance a subject gives to

principled moral considerations in making a decision about moral delemmas" (Rest, 1979b, p.52). It is derived by adding together points accrued by choosing Stages 5A, 5B, and 6 responses. A participant is assigned 4 points for a "most important" response, 3 points for a "second most important" response, 2 points for a third and 1 point for a fourth. Raw stage scores, obtained by adding points assigned on all six dilemmas, are converted to percentages by dividing by .6.

The Sentence Completion Test (SCT). Loevinger's measure of ego development is a projective test composed of twenty-six sentence stems. Items include such stems as - My father . . ., Education . . ., Being with other people . . ., I feel sorry . . . (Loevinger, 1970). The basic operation in scoring is matching - matching a particular response to a sequence of qualitative descriptions of stage structures and their manifestations. For each stem there is a set of sample responses that fit each particular stage structure. The mode is used to arrive at overall protocol ratings.

Procedures

Due to time constraints only four of the twenty-six stems from the SCT were used. The items used included - Raising a family . . . , What gets me into trouble is . . ., My father . . ., and My main problem is . . . . The criterion for choice was breadth of pull for the various ego levels (cf. Loevinger, 1970). These four sentence stems along with the DIT were administered together in a group setting. The EPPS was given at a later date on an individual basis.

All fifteen of the personality variables measured by the EPPS were scored. Raw scores were converted to percentile scores by using the appropriate norm for each participant. The DIT was scored for the

P-factor (principled reasoning factor). The SCT was independently scored by the author and a second graduate student. Each of the four sentence stems was scored separately. Interrater reliability, calculated by the percent agreement method, for all sentence stems was .76. Differences in scoring were discussed and final decisions agreed upon. The participants' overall protocol rating was derived by using the modal score for the four stems, or in the case of ties the mean.

Results of each instrument were made available to the participants. Scores on the EPPS and the DIT were interpreted in the classroom. Protocol ratings on the SCT were discussed on an individual basis.

RESULTS

With a possible range of 0 - 28, raw intraception scores on the Edwards ranged from 3 to 23, with a mean of 16.08. Percentile scores ranged from 3 to 93, with a mean of 49.14.

Principled reasoning percentage scores on the DIT ranged between .07 and .66, with a mean score of .31. This is about what one would expect when considering participant characteristics and results of past studies (cf. Rest, 1979b).

Participants could obtain protocol ratings on the SCT from Impulsive (I-2) to Integrated (I-6), with I-3/4 and I-4/5 ratings indicating a transition between stages. In the present study no individual sentence stem was rated I-2 or I-6. Ratings ranged from Delta to I-5. Individual variability was generally within one or two stages, only five subjects having a wider variability. Overall protocol ratings ranged from I-3 to I-4/5 with the following division of the participant ratings by stage: I-3, 12; I-3/4, 15; I-4, 12; and I-4/5,1.

The results of the data analyses supported all three hypotheses. The first was that the need for intraception would correlate positively with level of moral reasoning. The correlations of raw and percentile scores for intraception with P-scores on the DIT were $r = .33$ ($p \leq .03$) and $r = .39$ ($p \leq .01$) respectively.

Insert Table 1 about here

Support for the second hypothesis, that there would be a positive correlation between intraception and ego level as measured by the SCT was less substantive. Raw intraception scores correlated with ego level scores yielded $r = .21$ ($p \leq .11$). Percentile intraception scores with ego level scores yielded $r = .25$ ($p \leq .07$). Analysis of variance further substantiated these findings. With the data collapsed into two groups (I-3 and I-3/4 = 24; I-4 and I-4/5 = 13), a one-way analysis of variance of intraception percentile scores by ego level was significant, $F(1,35) = 4.32$, $p \leq .05$.

The last hypothesis that moral development is related to ego development was also supported. A one-way analysis of variance of P-scores by ego level yielded an $F(1,35) = 7.53$, $p \leq .01$.

Insert Table 2 about here

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this study support Loevinger's hypothesis that she is measuring moral development in measuring ego maturity (Loevinger, 1974). The data are consistent with her contention that moral development is part of the broader concept of ego development. The relationship,

however, is not so strong as to indicate that the same "thing" is being measured.

The hypothesis that a personality variable, the need for intraception, is related positively to both moral and ego development was verified. Kohlberg's and Loevinger's theories postulate that cognitive development is necessary but not sufficient for the attainment of higher levels. The present data suggest that intraception, an affective variable, may be one of the additional important factors. The definition of intraception as measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule suggests that a disposition to role-take is an important part of this need. This desire to role-take could strengthen an individual's capacity for interpersonal relations and account for qualitatively different interactions which may stimulate moral and ego development.

The question needing further exploration is what factors contribute to the growth of intraception. The necessity to manage interpersonal conflict could be one such factor. Perhaps intraceptive individuals have a different mode or characteristic style of coping with conflict that is more internally than externally oriented. Parental behavior is one factor that could influence such a choice in style. Further research in these areas could help to integrate the personological and developmental factors involved in moral growth.

Table 1

Correlations Between EPPS Intraception Score and DIT P-Score and Ego Level

(N = 37)

Intraception Score	DIT P-Score	Ego Level
Raw	.33**	.21
Percentile Score	.39***	.25*

*p ≤ .10
**p ≤ .05
***p ≤ .01

Table 2

Summary of Means and F-Values

Ego Level	Intraception % - Score		DIT % - Score	
	$\bar{X}$	F-Value	$\bar{X}$	F-Value
Conformist (I - 3)	43.4	4.32*	.27	7.53**
Conscientious (I - 4)	58.5		.38	

*p ≤ .05
**p ≤ .01

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